

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 24-25
160651452.1

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Seneca

Aqueduct

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

mouth of Great Seneca Creek, off River Road

CITY, TOWN

Seneca

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☒ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☒ MUSEUM
☒ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

National Park Service-Dep't. of the

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

Interior

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1936

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The lock here is one of the very few built into the end of an aqueduct. Its walls are lined with the local red sandstone. The aqueduct itself is a very rare feature along the Canal. It is a three-arch span of dressed sandstone, with a flat parapet and low, keystone arches. The westernmost arch collapsed into Seneca Creek after a severe flood in the fall of 1971.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

M:24-25

PERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 00-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This was one of the most active areas on the C & O Canal in this County. It continues today to be a heavily-visited recreational area of the Parks. Important due to its relationship with old milling community of Seneca, its Seneca Sandstone construction and its proximity to related features-such as the River, the turning basin, and the quarry area. (See references on next page.)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

M:24-25

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) Sween, Jane. "Seneca", MONT. CO. STORY, Mont. Co. Hist. Society, (1971).
- 2) HISTORY OF POTOMAC, booklet by local Civic Assoc. (1970's)
- 3) Scharf, HISTORY OF WESTERN MD. (1882), Vol. I.
- 4) Hahn, Thos. F. TOWPATH GUIDE TO C & O CANAL. (1971).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (5) SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS. (1976) research sheets.

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

COLESCORP. INC. DATE _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE _____

COUNTY _____

STATE _____

COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

5/20/74

STREET & NUMBER

8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE

589-1480

CITY OR TOWN

Silver Spring

STATE

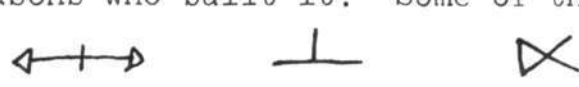
Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

1. Name of Landmark: Seneca Creek Aqueduct
2. Location: At the mouth of Great Seneca Creek, about a mile south of River Road.
3. Present use: Park of the C&O Canal National Historical Park.
4. Owner: U.S. National Park Service
5. Date or period built: 1828-1830
6. Architectural description: A three arch, red sandstone canal aqueduct; one arch has collapsed. Of eleven C&O canal aqueducts, the Seneca Aqueduct was the only one made of "Seneca sandstone"; it is the most important canal structure made of sandstone, and one of the most admired canal structures. A few stones in the Aqueduct carry marks of the stone masons who built it. Some of the most prominent are:



In the 1870's the Aqueduct had to be partially dismantled and rebuilt; it required further repairs after the destructive 1889 flood. In September 1971 the Aqueduct was damaged by a flash flood on Seneca Creek, and the upstream parapet and arch collapsed a few weeks later. Part of the original wrought iron railing on the Aqueduct survives.
7. Builder: Unknown
8. Original owner: The C&O Canal Company
9. Historic association: Located next to Lock #24 on the C&O canal it is the only Aqueduct contiguous to a lock. The sandstone was quarried from bluffs about a half mile up the Potomac, and cut in the stone mill nearby. The first boats crossed the Aqueduct in the spring of 1833 and from then until the canal closed in 1924, thousands of boats passed over the Aqueduct, including scows that carried sandstone to Georgetown from the nearby quarries. Part of the historic canal community of Seneca, it was used by residents and quarry workman to cross Seneca Creek. It was protected by Union garrisons during the Civil War.
10. Bibliography: 1. Hahn, Tom. C&O Towpath Guide. 1970.
2. Interview with Ray Riley, former locktender.
11. Researcher: Edwin F. Wesely
7101 Ridgewood Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015

1. Name of Landmark: Seneca
2. Location: Between River Road and the Potomac River; where the Seneca Creek flows into the Potomac River.
3. Present use: The town is a mixture of private homes, waterfront recreation activities, and the C&O Canal National Historic Park.
4. Owner: Mixture of private ownership, the National Park Service, and the State of Maryland: Department of Natural Resources.
5. Date or period built: 1787
6. Architectural description: There are approximately 60 structures in the community; most are cabins along Seneca Creek. The most interesting structures in the area are the C&O Canal with its aqueduct, locks, and lock keeper's house; and the Seneca sandstone quarries and stone cutting mill.
7. Builder:
8. Original owner: Land in this area was first patented to Richard Brightwell on August 29, 1695. In 1787 John Garrett laid out the town of Seneca.
9. Historic association: Seneca - once the land of Indians, then of the early settlers to this Potomac River Frontier, a farming community, canal town, and site of the Seneca quarries. Two of the earliest grants of land in this area were to Richard Brightwell, on August 29, 1695, who used the area as a hunting quarter. The community of Seneca was laid out by John Garrett in 1787. He held a lottery with town lots as the prizes to attract residents. Although his town failed to develop as he had hoped, by 1830 engineering technology had transformed the area into a canal town along the C&O Canal. The prosperity of the town was tied to the canal and to the famous Seneca sandstone, which had been used by Indians in the area and by earlier colonists, but which could now be shipped on the canal to building sites in Washington, including the original Smithsonian Institution buildings. When both the canal and the quarry operations failed in the early 1900's, Seneca declined and today is little more than a store, some houses and weekend cabins along Seneca Creek.
10. Bibliography:
 1. Owen, Claude W. "Seneca, once a commercial center." History of Potomac. 1970. Published by Potomac Almanac.
 2. Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Western Maryland. Vol. 1. Reprinted by the Regional Publishing Company: Baltimore. 1968.

3. Sween, Jane Chinn. "Seneca". The Montgomery County Story. November 1971. Montgomery County Historical Society.

11. Researcher: G. David Ellis
9307 Longbranch Parkway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

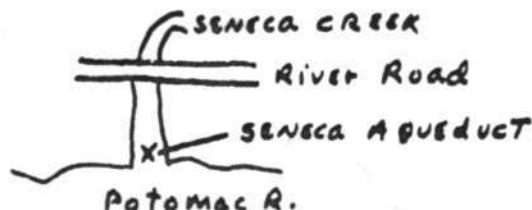
Sample Landmarks Research Form

Sugarloaf Regional Trail

M: 24-25⁹

1. Name of landmark: Seneca Creek Aqueduct
2. Address: none
3. Other locational data: At the mouth of Great Seneca Creek, about a mile south of River Road.
4. Owner: U.S. National Park Service
5. Description of landmark: A three arch, red sandstone canal aqueduct; one arch has collapsed.
6. Setting: Located next to lock #24 on the C&O Canal, and just below an old canal turning basin and the ruins of the Seneca stone mill. The Potomac River is a few yards south of the Aqueduct, and is very wide and scenic.
7. Other observations: Seneca was a small canal town, and the Seneca area was very prominent during canal days. Nearby are the ruins of the Seneca stone-cutting mill, and the remains of the old sandstone quarries. There are said to many Indian sites nearby.
8. Present use: Part of the C&O Canal National Historical Park.
9. Physical condition of the structure: One arch of the Aqueduct collapsed in 1972; the rest has been stabilized. Stones from the collapsed arch are stored nearby.
10. Approximate acreage: not applicable. There is extensive parkland nearby and around the Aqueduct.
11. Zoning status: On federal land
12. Date or period: built in 1828-1830; later repairs
- Architect: unknown
- Builder: unknown
- Original owner: C&O Canal Company
- Type of construction: local red sandstone and lime mortar
- Architectural style: ??????

13. Locational map:



14. Name and address of researcher: John Doe
Box 123
Dickerson, Md. 20753

(301) 661-1234

(1) The landmark's history:

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The Seneca aqueduct was built with red sandstone quarried from bluffs about a half mile up the Potomac. Construction began in the summer of 1828; work was completed in September 1830; and the first boats crossed the Aqueduct in the spring of 1833. Its use had to wait on water—the Aqueduct was watered from a dam just above the Federal Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia—and the canal was not completed to Harper's Ferry until 1833.

Until the canal closed in 1924, thousands of boats passed over the Aqueduct, including scows that carried sandstone to Georgetown from the nearby Seneca quarries.

In the 1870's the Aqueduct had to be partially dismantled and rebuilt; and required further repairs after the destructive 1889 flood.

In September, 1971 the Aqueduct was damaged by a flash flood on Seneca Creek, and the upstream parapet and arch collapsed a few weeks later. The remaining arches were stabilized, awaiting restoration of the Aqueduct.

The U.S. Department of Interior bought the C&O Canal in 1938, and in January 1971 it became a National Historical Park.

(2) Significance:

- a) Of eleven C&O Canal Aqueducts, the Seneca Aqueduct was the only one made of "Seneca sandstone"; and is the most important canal structure made of it.
- b) It is the only Aqueduct contiguous to a lock.
- c) It was part of the historic canal community of Seneca.

(3) Notable features:

- a) Part of the original wrought iron railing survives.
- b) On a stone post on the east end of the Aqueduct are a number of marks and inscriptions—among them the names of canal workmen, a Civil War soldier, and a line showing the high water mark of the 1889 flood.
- c) A few stones in the Aqueduct trough carry marks of the stone masons who built it (known as "banker's marks"). Some of the most prominent are:



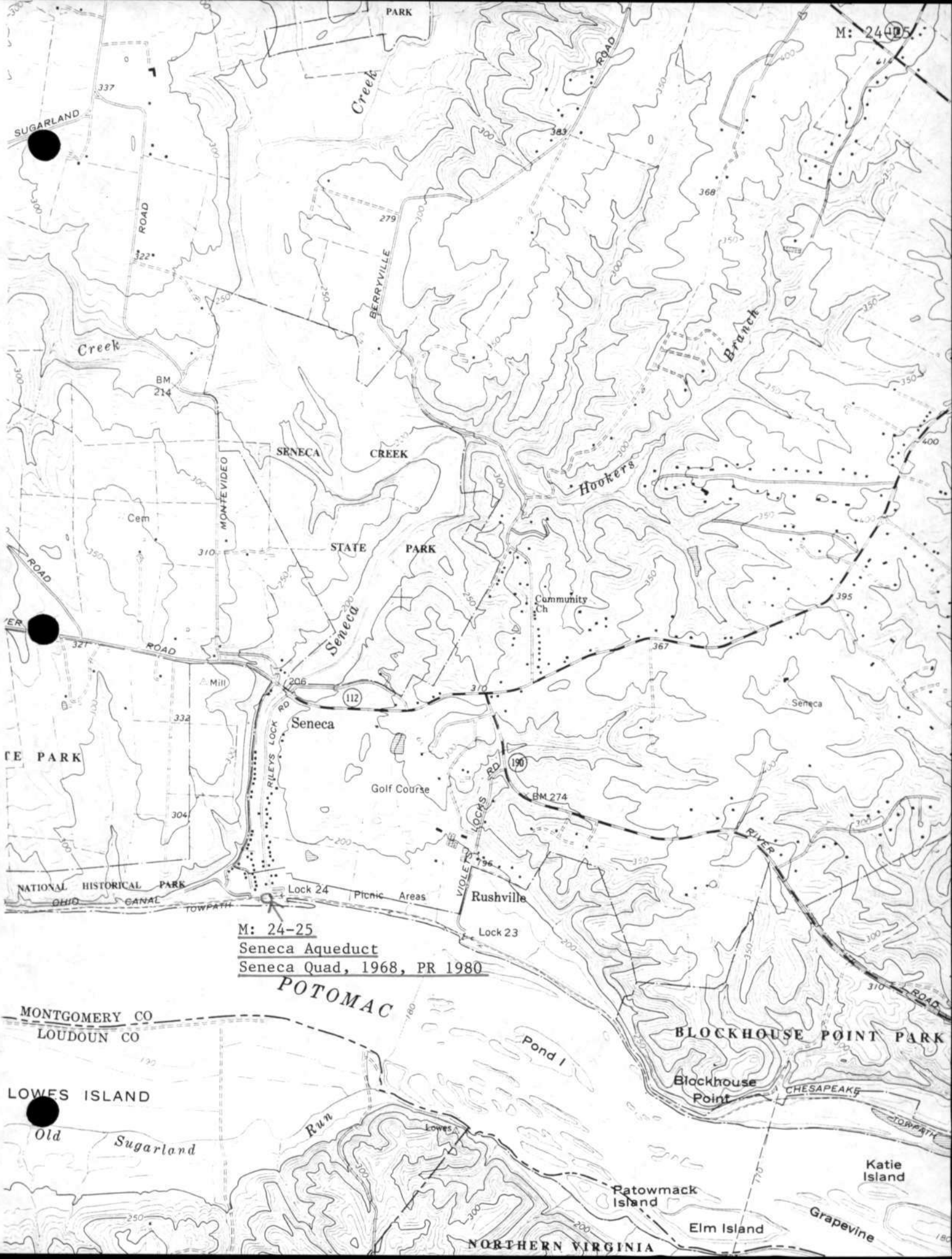
(4) Historic relationships:

- a) Part of the historic canal community of Seneca; used by residents and quarry workmen to cross Seneca Creek.
- b) close ties to nearby sandstone quarries and stone-mill
- c) protected by Union garrisons during the Civil War; near site of Rowser's Ford, a famous Civil War crossing.
- d) at the east end of the Aqueduct is lock #24 and its adjoining lockhouse (made of the same sandstone). Ray Riley, whose father tended the lock still lives in the community.
- e) The view from the Seneca Aqueduct is one of the most scenic on the Potomac; and the Aqueduct one of the most admired canal structures.

(5) Bibliography:

- a) C&O Canal Towpath Guide—Tom Hahn—1970
- b) personal inspection
- c) interview with Ray Riley, former locktender

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M: 24-25
Seneca Aqueduct
Seneca Quad, 1968, PR 1980

POTOMAC

MONTGOMERY CO
LOUDOUN CO

LOWES ISLAND
Old Sugarland

BLOCKHOUSE POINT PARK
Blockhouse Point
CHESAPEAKE

Potowmack Island
Elm Island
Grapevine
Katie Island
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

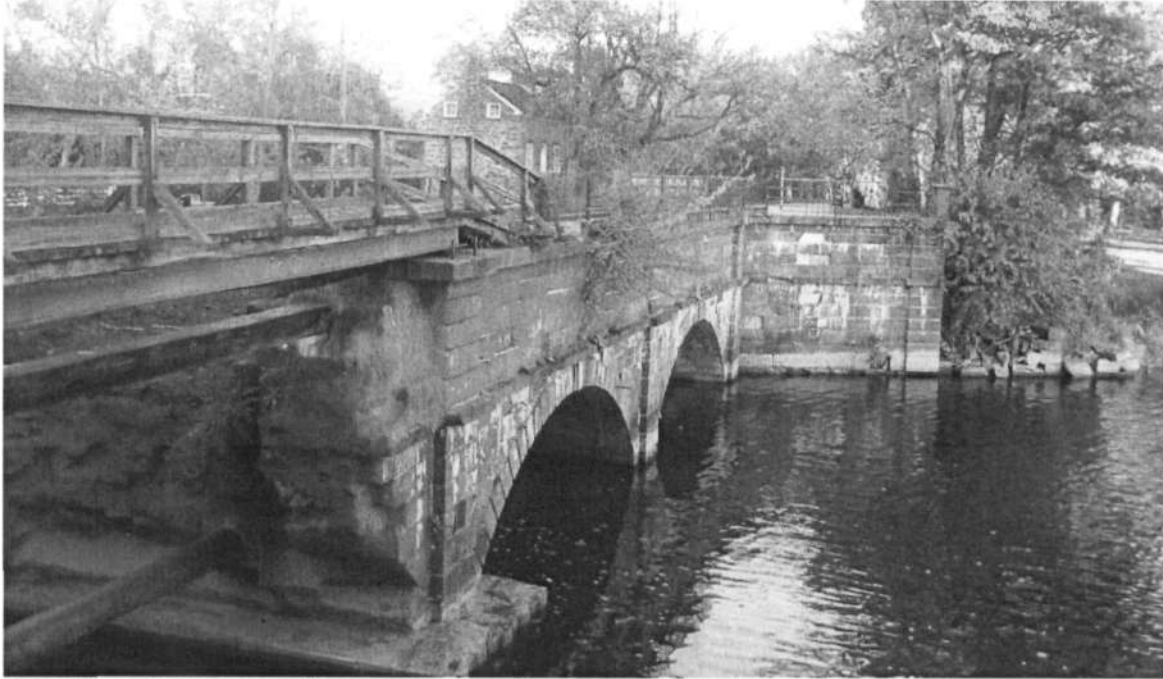
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Seneca Aqueduct

Riley's Lock Road; Seneca Creek and Potomac River, Poolesville

Jennifer K. Cosham, 3 November 2007

Facing northeast, from west bank of Seneca Creek, south of aqueduct



Aqueduct, facing west from east end

